

# SPORTFISHING RULE PROPOSALS

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# STATEWIDE RULES

## 1. DAILY LIMIT FOR EASTERN BROOK TROUT

**PROPOSAL:** Remove the daily limit for Eastern brook trout in all rivers, streams, and beaver ponds.

**EXPLANATION:** Currently there is no minimum size and anglers may keep up to 5 Eastern brook trout in streams, but no more than 5 trout total, and no more than 2 can be other trout species. If this proposal is adopted, other trout species would still have a daily limit of 2 (unless otherwise noted), but there would be no minimum size and no daily limit for Eastern brook trout. Brook trout are an introduced, non-native species and are numerous and widespread in Washington. They have been identified as a threat to native bull trout populations through interbreeding and competition for food and habitat. The intent of this regulation is to reduce Eastern brook trout populations in streams, to reduce their impact on bull trout, and secondarily provide additional harvest opportunity for anglers.

## 2. CLASSIFY TIGER TROUT AS A GAME FISH

**PROPOSAL:** Classify tiger trout as a game fish to be regulated with other trout species.

**EXPLANATION:** Tiger Trout are sterile hybrids resulting from crossing brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) females with brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) males. Tiger trout have been stocked in several lakes around the state, but are not currently listed as a game fish. Without this regulation, there would be no harvest regulations for tiger trout. If this proposal is adopted, tiger trout would be classified as game fish, becoming part of the trout daily limit (usually five in lakes and two in streams).

## 3. BUOYANT LURE RESTRICTION

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal would add the following restrictions to buoyant lures used in waters with a non-buoyant lure restriction in place: Hooks must be attached to or below but within 3 inches of the floating lure. No hook may be tied above the lure.

**EXPLANATION:** The non-buoyant lure restriction is used in areas where salmon congregate and snagging is a problem. Allowing hooks above floating lures significantly increases the likelihood of snagging, so this modification should make the rule more effective.

## 4. STURGEON TAGS AND SEALS

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal would make it unlawful to possess a sturgeon in the field unless the fish is sealed and has a sturgeon tag attached.

**EXPLANATION:** The annual limit for sturgeon is very hard to enforce. One reason for this is that anglers who have caught their annual limit can claim to have lost their catch record card, and have a new one issued. This replacement card has spaces to record a new annual limit of sturgeon. This proposal is intended to make the limit more enforceable by requiring anglers, who intend to retain sturgeon, to purchase a group of "seals" to attach to any fish they wish to retain. The sealing mechanism is a plastic locking band that can be used only one time, and must remain unaltered. It would be inserted through the gills and out the fish's mouth. The WILD licensing system would

generate tags (in the form of self-sealing stickers) that contain the angler's WILD identification number and could be closed around the band at its closure point. Anglers who want to retain sturgeon would be issued a group of 5 seals and 5 stickers. The stickers would be non-replaceable, and could only be issued through the WILD system. This means that charter operators who use charter stamps in lieu of licenses will not be able to issue sturgeon seals. Tags and seals would be sold only in groups of 5 at a cost of \$3.50. Of this, WDFW would receive \$1 for the cost of the seals, and the dealer would receive \$2.50 (50 cents per tag) for the issuance of the tags.

## **5. DESIGNATED HARVESTER RULE CLARIFICATION**

**PROPOSAL:** Clarify the designated harvester rule to allow designated harvesters to take food fish or shellfish for disabled fishers.

**EXPLANATION:** WAC 220-55-065 allows a designated harvester to take a limit of any shellfish or food fish for a disabled fisher, but WAC 220-56-150 contradicts this by limiting the harvest to only razor clams. The proposal would remove the contradictory language in WAC 220-56-150. It also repeals an obsolete rule (WAC 220-56-370) referring to a razor clam disability permit, which no longer exists under the designated harvester system.

# **MARINE RULES**

## **GENERAL MARINE RULES**

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## **6. SINGLE HOOKS REQUIRED IN MARINE AREAS**

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal would require anglers to use no more than two single hooks in Marine Areas 1-13. (Forage fish jigger gear would be an exception – treble hooks would still be allowed on this gear).

**EXPLANATION:** Although the issue of single versus double (two point) or treble (three point) hooks has been addressed in previous regulation cycles, it came up again at the 2003 North of Falcon salmon management meetings. WDFW made a commitment to include it in the current regulation development process.

Barbless treble hooks are frequently used in Puget Sound jig fisheries for salmon. There is some contention that requiring single hooks will reduce hooking mortality on salmon that are released. WDFW evaluated numerous studies on hooking mortality associated with treble hooks during past regulation development cycles. The studies addressed impacts to trout, juvenile steelhead, Atlantic salmon, coho and chinook. The overall results of these studies couldn't find a significant difference in hooking mortality between treble and single hooks on "trout sized fish" or small salmon. We are not aware of any studies that directly compare mortality rates of barbless treble hooks versus barbless single hooks in jig fisheries for salmon.

Even though the main concerns expressed about treble hooks have dealt with salmon, the proposal to require single hooks needs to apply to all species to make it enforceable.

## **7. RULES FOR SALMON RELEASE IN MARINE AREAS 5-13**

**Proposal:** In Marine Areas 5-13, this proposal would make it illegal to bring on board a vessel any salmon required to be released. Putting a similar rule in place in Marine Areas 1-4 will be discussed next spring during the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) process where salmon seasons are set coastwide.

**Explanation:** This rule (adopted through the North of Falcon process) was used with success this summer to provide additional protection for wild salmon released during a selective chinook fishery in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Fish that are brought on board the boat tend to obtain more injuries and are more likely to suffer delayed mortality even if they are alive when released back into the water.

## **8. OCTOPUS HOLE MARINE CONSERVATION AREA**

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal would change the boundary of the Octopus Hole Marine Conservation Area (MCA) to remove the exception for the area within 100 feet of the high watermark. The pamphlet would note that: the Octopus Hole MCA is "Closed to harvest except tideland owners and their families may still harvest clams, oysters, and mussels from their property."

**EXPLANATION:** Rockfish are being caught in the area within 100 feet of the high watermark. The fish are residents of the Octopus Hole MCA reef structure, and are driven to the shallows by low dissolved oxygen events, an ongoing problem in the part of Hood Canal near Octopus Hole. This proposal will protect these fish, to coincide with the original intent of the MCA.

# **MARINE FISH RULES**

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## **9. FORAGE FISH JIG GEAR**

**PROPOSAL:** Allow anglers to use forage fish jig gear in Columbia River waters from the Buoy 10 line to the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line.

**EXPLANATION:** No specific rule exists governing the harvest of forage fish in the Columbia River east of the Buoy 10 line. Statewide rules allow for the harvest of 10 pounds in the aggregate for herring, sardines, sandlance and anchovies, but without this proposal anglers would be restricted to statewide freshwater hook provisions (one line, no more than three hooks).

## **10. LINGCOD FISHERY DATES**

**PROPOSAL:** Change the open season for the lingcod fishery in Marine Areas 5-13 to August 1 – Sept 15 for angling and August 21 – September 15 for spear fishing. This delays both fisheries from their previous seasons in May and June.

**EXPLANATION:** Rockfish are caught as bycatch in the lingcod fishery. Making this change will enable us to better monitor the catch, which is currently very difficult during the earlier season, due to lack of personnel.

## **11. PUGET SOUND ROCKFISH CONSERVATION**

Fish biologists and managers have learned that rockfish generally are very slow growing, long-lived species that can only sustain low fishing rates. Many rockfish populations in Puget Sound are believed to be only 10% or less of their historic abundance. Adults tend to stay close to home near specific rocky reef habitats. Rockfish that are captured and released from even moderately deep waters are not believed to survive because their swim bladders over-inflate during the quick trip to the surface. These factors make rockfish more vulnerable to fishing-related impacts than a number of other fish species. Managers established strict harvest regulations in recent years in response to population declines, with the management intent to stop targeted harvest of rockfish in Puget Sound east of Slip Point in the outer Strait of Juan de Fuca. The rebuilding process will be very slow and the Department wants to ensure that harvest impacts on rockfish in Puget Sound will not impede recovery of this species group.

Therefore, as part of Governor Locke's Puget Sound Action Plan priorities, the Department is leading development of a Puget Sound Conservation Plan for rockfish, with an anticipated completion date of December 2004. This comprehensive resource management framework will more clearly establish and integrate goals, objectives and needed actions. While this long-term rockfish rebuilding strategy is being developed, the Department is reviewing current fishing regulations. The goals of this review are to ensure there is no targeting on rockfish and to reduce non-target rockfish impacts in fisheries directed at other species (e.g., salmon). This review will include both recreational and commercial fisheries in Puget Sound that potentially impact rockfish.

The one fish daily limit east of Slip Point in Area 5 began in 2000 to reduce harvest and to deter targeted fishing on rockfish. The regulation was designed to allow anglers to land some incidental catch of rockfish taken when fishing for other species. This was based on the recognition that release mortality of rockfish is believed to be 100% for deepwater fisheries. The one fish daily limit was believed to be small enough to discourage targeting rockfish while still allowing most incidental mortalities to be landed. It also allowed estimation of the majority of recreational fishery impacts.

Nevertheless, the Department still has concerns that there may be some high-grading and targeting of rockfish during fisheries directed at other species, as well as possible targeting during times and areas that have been closed for salmon, lingcod and halibut. As a result, we are seeking input on other possible approaches for near-term regulations that better meet the intent to eliminate target fishing and reduce incidental impacts on rockfish. We will continue the analysis of this problem and use public input to formulate final recommendations to the Fish and Wildlife Commission about any additional actions that may be appropriate for 2004-05 fisheries and to consider such suggestions during completion of the Rockfish Conservation and Rebuilding Plan.

The Department is seeking public comment on two specific options presented below that would reflect changes to the seasons and bag limits for rockfish in Puget Sound. In



addition, if there are other strategies that you believe could help minimize target or non-target impacts on rockfish, those ideas also would be very helpful in formulating recommendations to the Commission.

One important fishery management strategy - small area closures or marine protected areas - has not been included in these short-term options. A number of area closures currently exist inside Puget Sound and are being evaluated. While the Department feels the expanded use of such strategies likely will be important for rockfish, the intent is to consider such tools more comprehensively in the development of the long-term Rockfish Conservation Plan. This consideration will include the mapping of critical rockfish habitat as well as defining specific objectives and evaluation plans for use of these important regulatory tools. This will provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating specific rockfish closure options to ensure that selected areas would provide an integrated, geographic strategy to reduce rockfish impacts and perhaps augment recruitment rates.

**Option 1:**

- A)** Close Puget Sound boat-based marine bottomfish fisheries in Areas 5-13 when seasons for halibut, lingcod or salmon are not open. Anglers could still harvest shellfish from a boat or harvest forage fish with forage fish jig gear.
- B)** Allow no retention of rockfish by shore-based fishers in Marine Areas 5-13 when seasons for halibut, lingcod or salmon are not open.
- C)** Close spear fishing for rockfish in Marine Areas 5-13 year-round.

**Explanation:** As noted above the landing allowance for rockfish is intended to accommodate incidental encounters that occur while fishing for other species. The primary, target fin fish fisheries in Puget Sound marine waters currently are directed at salmon, ling cod and halibut during specific seasons. When fishing for these key species is not open, then a clear rationale may not exist for any marine finfish openings, given the conservation status of rockfish. Under this rationale spear fishing is clearly a target opportunity and not an incidental catch.

In addition, monitoring and enforcement activities are costly to maintain during these time frames. In recent years the Department has not had sufficient resources to make good rockfish catch estimates, though current changes in monitoring programs are being implemented with the hopes of remedying this issue. Shellfishing activities exist that would help moderate the loss of these bottom fish opportunities, and shore-based fishing for species such as surf perch could be maintained without a concern for rockfish retention, since deepwater habitats would not be accessible. Anglers could still be allowed to fish from a boat for game fish such as sea-run cutthroat (catch-and-release).

**Option 2:** Prohibit retention of rockfish – 0 rockfish daily limit. This could be implemented in:

- A) All areas (e.g., Areas 5-13) or
- B) Selected catch areas where rockfish status appears most critical (e.g., Hood Canal [Area 12] and South Sound [Area 13]).

**Explanation:** This regulation has already been implemented for canary and yelloweye rockfish in Puget Sound to mirror ocean regulations and recognize the critical conservation status for these species. The most significant fishery impacts on Puget Sound rockfish appear to be occurring incidentally during fisheries targeted at other species. While the 1 rockfish daily limit has discouraged targeted rockfish harvests to a large extent, the Department believes that some targeting and high-grading is still occurring. Two key considerations correspond to this option: (1) we do not know whether a total non-retention (daily limit 0) would change fishing behavior and reduce encounter rates and mortality on rockfish; and (2) without an on-water monitoring program, which the Department does not have the current resources to implement, the encounters and impacts of rockfish probably cannot be reliably estimated.

## **12. SIX-GILL SHARK PROTECTION**

**PROPOSAL:** This rule would make it illegal to remove six-gill sharks from the water.

**EXPLANATION:** Because of concerns that the fishery for these fish may over harvest the population, retention of six-gill sharks is currently prohibited. However, catch-and-release fisheries for this species still occur. Damage can occur to the internal organs of these fish when they are removed from the water.

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## **SHELLFISH RULES**

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## **13. TENDING SHELLFISH POT GEAR AT NIGHT**

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal is a housekeeping change to the rule that limits when anglers may tend shellfish pot gear from a boat.

**EXPLANATION:** The intent of the rule is correctly captured in the fishing pamphlet – anglers may not pull shellfish pot gear in marine waters from a boat at night. (Crayfish pots in fresh water may be tended at night). However, the language in the supporting WAC is unclear and may actually allow this activity. This proposal fixes the problem.

## **14. PUGET SOUND CRAB SEASONS**

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal sets the yearly open periods for crab fishing in Puget Sound.

The open crab fishing season in the waters of Puget Sound is as follows:

Marine Areas 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13: Open 7:00 a.m. June 1 through February 28.

Southern portion of Marine Area 7, (San Juan Islands): Open 7:00 a.m. June 16 through February 28.

This portion of Marine Area 7 includes all waters of Marine Area 7 south and west of a line projected from Village Point, Lummi Island through the navigation buoy just east of Matia Island thence to the buoy at Clements Reef thence to the easternmost point of Patos Island, running along the northern shoreline of Patos Island and from the westernmost point of Patos Island due west to the international boundary; and westerly

of a straight line from the northernmost tip of Sinclair Island through Lummi Rocks to Lummi Island; and west of a line projected from the southeast point of Sinclair Island to the ferry dock at Shannon Point.

Eastern portion of Marine Area 7, (Anacortes to Bellingham): Open 7:00 a.m. July 16 through March 15.

This portion of Marine Area 7 includes all waters of Marine Area 7 south of a line that extends from Point Francis on Portage Island, through the marker just north of Inati Bay on Lummi Island to Lummi Island, and east of a line that extends from the Anacortes ferry dock at Shannon Point, northward to the southeastern tip of Sinclair Island, thence from the northernmost tip of Sinclair Island through Lummi Rocks to Lummi Island.

Northern portion of Marine Area 7 (Gulf of Georgia): Open 7:00 a.m. August 16 through April 15.

Northern portion of Marine Area 7 include all waters of Marine Area 7 north and east of a line projected from Village Point, Lummi Island through the navigation buoy just east of Matia Island thence to the buoy at Clements Reef thence to the easternmost point of Patos Island, running along the northern shoreline of Patos Island and from the westernmost point of Patos Island due west to the international boundary and north of a line that extends from Point Francis on Portage Island, through the marker just north of Inati Bay on Lummi Island to Lummi Island.

Marine Area 8-1: Open 7:00 a.m. June 1 through September 30.

Marine Area 8-2: Open 7:00 a.m. May 16 through September 30.

**EXPLANATION:** the adoption of this proposal will provide the recreational community with specific opening dates for crab fishing that can be published in the sportfishing pamphlet. The open seasons in Puget Sound apply to all legal gears and methods of harvest.

## **15. COLUMBIA RIVER CRAB POT SEASON**

**PROPOSAL:** Change the crab pot season in the Columbia River to year-round.

**EXPLANATION:** Crab are not soft shelled during the current closed season (Sept 16 – Nov 30). Oregon allows pot fishing year-round, and most of the winter crabbing areas are in Oregon. Keeping our rules consistent with those in Oregon whenever possible in concurrent waters makes enforcement easier and makes the rules easier for the public to understand.

## **16. CRABBING FROM THE COLUMBIA RIVER NORTH JETTY**

**PROPOSAL:** When crabbing from the Columbia River North Jetty, the Dungeness crab daily limit would be 12 males, minimum size 5 3/4 “

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal allows North Jetty sport crabbers the same daily limit and minimum size and daily limit for Dungeness Crab as those fishing in the adjacent Columbia River area from boats.

## **17. COLUMBIA RIVER MOUTH DEFINITION FOR CRAB FISHERY**

**PROPOSAL:** For the Dungeness crab fishery, the Columbia River is defined as upstream of a line extending from the tip of the North Jetty to the exposed tip of the South Jetty.

**EXPLANATION:** The Buoy 10 line (which currently defines the mouth of the Columbia River) runs through the middle of the most popular summer crabbing area. For Washington crabbers, Dungeness crab rules are different on the ocean side (daily limit 6 males, 6" minimum size) than they are on the river side (daily limit 12 males, 5 ¾" minimum size). Oregon allows 12 males, 5 ¾" minimum size both upstream and downstream of the Buoy 10 line. This results in an area in the river downstream of the Buoy 10 line, on the Washington side only, that has different rules for Dungeness crab. This proposed rule would standardize the rules in both areas for both states making it less confusing for anglers, and making enforcement of the rules easier.

## **18. OYSTER HARVEST**

**PROPOSAL:** Remove the rule that limits oyster harvest to waters less than 2 feet deep.

**EXPLANATION:** Currently, oysters may not be harvested from water over two feet deep. This rule is no longer necessary for conservation of the oyster resource, and has always been difficult to enforce.

## **19. CLAM AND OYSTER SEASONS**

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal sets the season for recreational harvest of oysters on seven beaches to coincide with the clam season. The proposed seasons would be as follows:

Frye Cove County Park: Open January 1 – May 31

Hope Island State Park: Open April 1 – April 30.

Port Townsend Ship Canal/Portage Canal: Open January 1 – April 30

Potlatch DNR Tidelands: Closed all year

Sequim Bay State Park: Open May 1 – June 15

Shine Tidelands State park: Open January 1 – May 15.

South Indian Island County Park: Closed all year.

Other proposed changes to both clam and oyster beach seasons will be announced later after sampling data from this year's fisheries have been collected and analyzed and tribal negotiations occur.

**EXPLANATION:** The above beaches are currently open year-round to oyster harvest, but not for clams. The oyster populations are not large, and oyster seasons, which extend beyond the clam season, only invite enforcement problems (because out-of-season clam harvesters may use the oyster season in excuse to be on the beach harvesting clams). WDFW enforcement has requested standardizing the seasons and State Parks staff have also requested these changes for the three State Park beaches affected.

## **20. HARD SHELL CLAM DEFINITION**

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal creates a legal definition of hard shell clams. The definition would be "All clams classified as shellfish under WAC 220-12-020, except geoduck clams, horse clams, and mud or soft shell clams."

**EXPLANATION:** The term "hard shell clams" appears in several WACs. A definition is provided for housekeeping purposes.

## 21. SHELLFISH CLASSIFICATION

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal contains several housekeeping changes that correct and update scientific names of shellfish. It also adds cockles and borers to the list of species included under the areas and seasons listed in WAC 220-56-350. Other changes are described below.

**EXPLANATION:** Along with the above housekeeping changes, this change also includes four other changes: 1) In the list of classified shellfish, the term “All other native marine clams” is dropped, with the language becoming : “All other marine clams existing in Washington in a wild state.” In a wild state is defined to mean that the population of animals it describes is naturally reproducing within the state. This should make it easier for sport clam diggers to understand that the daily limit applies to any species they come across (with specific sub-limits for some species) 2) Varnish clams are specifically listed as a classified species 3) Red abalone, a shellfish species which does not exist in Washington, is de-classified; and 4) the sea cucumber species *Cucumaria miniata* is de-classified. This species is not commercially fished, but is being taken by some recreational harvesters under the daily limit of 25 sea cucumbers. WDFW biologists have reported that *C. miniata* is disappearing at some harvested sites, especially in State Parks. De-classification would make *C. miniata* an unclassified marine invertebrate, reducing the daily limit to 10 in most areas, and preventing any harvest within State Parks.

## 22. SHRIMP SEASONS

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal adds language to the Port Angeles Shrimp District rule to say that it is open only on days set by emergency rule. It also provides a year-round season for Marine Areas 1,2,3, and Area 4 west of the Bonilla-Tatoosh Line.

**EXPLANATION:** This makes the Port Angeles Shrimp District rule similar to that for other shrimp districts, having open days set by emergency rule, and defines the season for coastal areas in the permanent rule.

## 23. SHRIMP DAILY LIMITS AND MINIMUM SIZES

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal makes the daily limit for shrimp in coastal areas (Marine Areas 1,2,3, and Area 4 west of the Bonilla-Tatoosh Line) a total of 10 pounds of all species. Fishers must retain the heads while in the field, and the minimum size for spot shrimp is one and three sixteenths inches from the base of the eyestalk to the top rear edge of the carapace. The Discovery Bay Shrimp District is proposed to be included under this rule. Fishers are not required to retain heads in the Hood Canal Shrimp District, or in the Port Angeles Shrimp District.

**EXPLANATION:** This rule change is largely a housekeeping issue as most of the provisions have been put into effect by emergency rule in the past, and listed in the fishing pamphlet. This puts the rules for daily and size limits into permanent rule and does away with the need for emergency rules for these items.

## **24. DAILY HOURS FOR SHRIMP DISTRICTS**

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal sets new daily hours for all of the Puget Sound Shrimp Districts. The new hours would be 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. each open day.

**EXPLANATION:** Due to large increases in the number of fishers participating in the Puget Sound recreational shrimp fishery, the number of open days each season has been drastically reduced over the past few years. For example, recent lengths of spot shrimp seasons for the Port Townsend Shrimp District were: 1997-186 days; 1998-126 days; 1999-37 days (shortened for payback due to large quota overage in 1998); 2000-48 days; 2001-29 days; 2002-5 days; 2003-4 days. Seasons have become so short that our ability to manage the fishery within the quotas has been compromised in some areas. Shorter hours per day should increase the precision of our sport catch estimate. This proposed change should reduce the daily catch rates, while still allowing opportunity to fish, and potentially create a situation where there are more days available to fish, or at least slow down the continual decreases in season length.

## **25. PORT TOWNSEND SHRIMP DISTRICT**

**PROPOSAL:** This housekeeping proposal would change the boundary of this district to read "All waters of Port Townsend Bay south and west of a line from Marrowstone Point to Point Hudson and north of the Port Townsend Ship Canal Bridge, including Kilisnoe Harbor. This description will be moved to WAC 220-16-270, with the other Shrimp District definitions.

**EXPLANATION:** This corrects the definition of the Port Townsend Bay Shrimp District in the WAC (definition was correct in the fishing pamphlet), and places it and other shrimp district definitions in WAC chapter 220-16 (Definitions).

# **FRESHWATER RULES**

## **General Freshwater Rules**

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## **26. SNAGGING CLARIFICATION**

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal would make it unlawful to possess a fish taken for personal use from fresh water that was not hooked inside the mouth or on the head. The head of a fish is defined as any portion forward of the rear margin of the gill plate. This rule would not apply to forage fish taken with forage fish jigger gear.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal is intended to clarify the snagging rule for both anglers and enforcement officers. There has been some confusion in the past as to exactly what constitutes a legally hooked fish. This proposal, if adopted, should clear it up.

## **27. REMOVING STEELHEAD AND SALMON FROM FRESH WATER**

**PROPOSAL:** When fishing in fresh water, (except in the Columbia River between the Buoy 10 line and the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line) it is illegal to remove from the water any salmon or steelhead required to be released.

**EXPLANATION:** This is expected to improve survival of released fish because they will not have the additional handling and stress caused by their removal from the water.

## 28. GAMEFISH CONTEST RULE

**PROPOSAL:** Adjust the rule for gamefish contests to eliminate a loophole in the boat limitation rule.

**EXPLANATION:** Currently, a loophole in the tournament regulation allows bass and walleye contests to ignore the boat limit by having at least one tournament angler fishing from shore. This was changed by emergency rule for a number of contests in 2002. Under this proposal, the WAC language becomes “(e) Contests for bass and walleye where ((all)) participants expect to fish at the same time from boats...”. By not requiring all anglers to fish from boats, the loophole is closed, and tournament boat limits would apply.

## 29. MINIMUM SIZE AND DAILY LIMIT FOR CRAPPIE

**PROPOSAL:** Place a minimum size of 9” and daily limit of 10 on crappie in a few select lakes (listed below) that have the potential to produce a consistent crop of quality crappie for harvest.

Downs Lake (Spokane Co), Eloika Lake (Spokane Co), Silver Lake (Spokane Co), Coffeepot Lake (Lincoln Co), Sprague Lake (Adams/Lincoln Co), Lower Goose Lake (Adams Co), Potholes Reservoir (Grant Co), Big Lake (Skagit Co), Campbell Lake (Skagit Co), Lake Cassidy (Snohomish Co), Roesiger Lake (Snohomish Co), Sawyer Lake (King Co), Black Lake (Thurston Co), Tanwax Lake (Pierce Co), and Duck Lake (Grays Harbor Co).

**EXPLANATION:** Currently, there are no size restrictions or daily limits for crappie in the majority of Washington’s waters. Current exceptions to this general rule include Coffeepot Lake (Lincoln Co), Duck Lake (Grays Harbor Co), Alkalai Lake (Grant Co), Lower Goose Lake (Adams Co), and Potholes Reservoir (Grant Co). This proposal would standardize the rule exceptions to include a 9” minimum size, which has been shown in recent studies to be more beneficial than the current 10” minimum size applied to some of these lakes. Potholes Reservoir would retain its current daily limit of 25 crappie and bluegill combined; the other lakes listed would have a daily limit of 10 crappie.

## REGION 1 RULES

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## 30. DAILY LIMIT FOR HATCHERY STEELHEAD IN SE WASHINGTON RIVERS

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal would change the daily limit for hatchery steelhead to 3 per day during open periods in the following streams in southeast Washington: Grande Ronde River, Mill Creek, Snake River, Touchet River, Tucannon River, and Walla Walla River. In the Touchet River, where anglers are also allowed to keep brown trout, the limit would be a combination of three hatchery steelhead and brown trout.

**EXPLANATION:** Southeastern Washington usually has large numbers of hatchery steelhead available for harvest. These are mitigation fish, produced for harvest. This increased daily limit has been put in place by emergency rule several times to provide additional harvest opportunity. Creating a permanent rule gives anglers more notice because it can be placed in the fishing pamphlet.

## 31. UPPER GRANDE RONDE STEELHEAD

### PROPOSAL:

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
GRANDE RONDE RIVER (Asotin Co) mouth to County Rd Bridge (about 2- 1/2 miles upstream)	TROUT	Year-round	Minimum size 10". Daily limit 2. Release all STEELHEAD. Selective gear rules Sept 1 - May 31.
	Other Game Fish	Year-round	Statewide min. size/daily limit. Selective gear rules Sept 1 – May 31.
From County Rd Bridge to Oregon state line and all tributaries	All Game Fish	June 1 - Aug 31	Statewide min. size/daily limit. Selective gear rules. Barbless hooks required.
	All Game Fish	Sept 1 - Oct 31	
	WHITEFISH	Nov 1 - April 15	No min. size. Daily limit 15. WHITEFISH only. Barbless hooks required. Tributaries CLOSED to fishing for WHITEFISH.
	STEELHEAD	Nov 1 – April 15	Min. size 20". Daily limit 2 hatchery STEELHEAD. Barbless hooks required. Tributaries CLOSED to fishing for STEELHEAD.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal shortens the selective gear restriction in the upper river to June 1 - August 31, allowing anglers to use bait beginning September 1 (but still requiring barbless hooks). The selective gear rule is intended to protect wild salmonids in the mainstem and tributaries. Allowing anglers to use bait beginning September 1 will make it easier to catch hatchery steelhead. In developing the 2002 / 2003 regulation proposal for the Grande Ronde River, to allow for additional angling opportunity for trout and other game fish species, the season was extended to October 31. The selective gear regulations in effect under the 2001 / 2002 pamphlet regulations were extended to cover this time period, to preclude a potential law enforcement conflict by having overlapping seasons and conflicting gear regulations in effect at the same time in the same area. The supplemental season for steelhead and whitefish following the general game fish and trout season, allowed the use of bait. By trying to eliminate potential law enforcement problems, a new problem developed, which was the inadvertent reduction of the season where the use of bait was allowed for steelhead fishing. This proposal attempts to restore the allowable use of bait, with barbless hooks, effective September 1.

## 32. HOG CANYON CREEK

**PROPOSAL:** Change the season on Hog Canyon Creek (Spokane Co) from Hog Canyon Dam to Scroggie Road from June 1- Oct 31 to open year-round.

**EXPLANATION:** Two thirds of this area is on BLM land, the other third is privately owned, but the owner (who proposes this rule change) allows fishing by permission. By the current June 1 opening, most of the area is overgrown with cattails and weeds and is not suitable for fishing.



### 33. KETTLE RIVER

#### PROPOSAL:

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
KETTLE RIVER (Ferry/Stevens Co) from Barstow Bridge upstream	TROUT	June 1 – Oct 31	Minimum size 12". Daily limit 2. Selective gear rules
	Other Game Fish	June 1- Oct 31	Statewide min. size/daily limit. Selective gear rules
	WHITEFISH	Nov 1 – May 31	No min. size. Daily limit 15 WHITEFISH only. Only one single hook 3/16" or smaller measured point to shank (size #14) may be used.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal will standardize the gear rules for all species on the Kettle River, making them easier to enforce and understand.

### 34. MILL CREEK CLOSED AREA

**PROPOSAL:** For Mill Creek (Walla Walla Co) - Change the CLOSED WATERS area in the lower river to be from the Gose Street Bridge to the Roosevelt Street Bridge (closed area was from the concrete channel at 9<sup>th</sup> Ave Bridge to Roosevelt Street Bridge)

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal is intended to protect listed steelhead that stack below the Gose Street Bridge/Fishway. Passage for steelhead below the Gose Street Bridge is very difficult, due to the stream channel configuration and obstructions. Eliminating fishing pressure on the fish concentrated below the bridge while they attempt to pass these obstructions will provide improved opportunity for their passage through this section.

### 35. NEGRO CREEK OPEN AREA

**PROPOSAL:** Expand the section of Negro Creek (Lincoln Co) that is open year-round to be from the mouth at Sprague Lake to the fish barrier at Fishtrap Lake (instead of from the mouth to the town of Sprague).

**EXPLANATION:** In some high water years there are fish available in the creek and pasture ponds outside of the currently open season.

### 36. TOUCHET AND WALLA WALLA RIVER BASS RULES

**PROPOSAL:** Change the rules for bass in these two rivers from the statewide standard to: Daily limit 5, but, no more than 3 over 15" may be retained.

**EXPLANATION:** This eliminates the size 'slot limit' and makes the rules for bass on these two rivers similar to the Columbia River at McNary and the Snake River, which are adjacent waters.

### 37. TUCANNON RIVER CLOSED AREA

**PROPOSAL:** Modify the closed area around the Tucannon Hatchery so that the lower boundary becomes the Tucannon Hatchery Bridge instead of Cummins Bridge.

**EXPLANATION:** Salmon and bull trout have been known to stack up in the area below the dam, but they do not stack up below the hatchery bridge as in the past when chinook were released directly from the hatchery. This change would allow adequate protection of adult fish, but more public access to fish the river on WDFW-owned lands.

### 38. LUCKY DUCK POND

**PROPOSAL:** Restrict fishing in Lucky Duck Pond (Stevens Co – within the town of Springdale) to juveniles only (under 15 years of age).

**EXPLANATION:** The Springdale Town Council has requested this change to provide recreational opportunity for youth in their community.

### 39. RIGLEY LAKE

**PROPOSAL:** Change the 14” minimum size for trout on Rigley Lake (Stevens Co) to 12”.

**EXPLANATION:** Rigley Lake has frequent winter kills. It is typically stocked with both surplus rainbow brood stock and catchable size rainbows. The catchables can’t grow to 14” by the end of the season, but can get to 12”. This change would allow anglers to harvest these fish at the end of the season, thus minimizing the winter kill of these fish in the lake.

## REGION 2 RULES

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### 40. CHELAN RIVER

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Chelan River (Chelan Co) from the railroad bridge to the Chelan PUD safety barrier below the power house	TROUT  OTHER GAME FISH	CLOSED  May 15 – Aug 31	Non-buoyant lure restriction.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal is intended to provide sport anglers an opportunity to harvest game fish, especially walleye and bass, with no impact to ESA listed fish.

The section of the Chelan River from the PUD boat ramp upstream to the Chelan PUD safety barrier has historically provided exceptional angling for walleye and sometimes bass. Because WDFW was unsure what impact anglers were having on ESA listed fish, this section of the Chelan River was closed to angling in 2000. The closure provided time to determine if any sport fishery could be allowed without inflicting undue harm to ESA fish. The information gathered to date indicates that WDFW has an opportunity to provide sport anglers a chance to fish for walleye and bass with very little if any impact to ESA listed fish (steelhead) in the section of the Chelan River from Chelan PUD safety barrier below the power house down river to the railroad bridge during May 15 - August 31. The section would open for all game fish except trout. It would remain closed to fishing for salmon.

Summer/fall chinook, which are not listed under the ESA do spawn in this section of the river. However, because of their life history traits, neither adults nor juveniles will be present during May 15- August 31. Steelhead spawn in the Chelan River, but spawning activity will cease and adult steelhead will be through spawning by May 15. During late spring, summer and fall, water temperatures in the Chelan River rise above 70 degrees F. These temperatures are above juvenile steelhead tolerance limits. Consequently, when water temperatures rise, juvenile steelhead will leave this section

of the Chelan River and enter the Columbia River in search of cooler water. The closure to retention of trout and salmon will protect any trout or salmon that may wander into this section during the open fishing season. The proposed regulation change will not only give anglers an opportunity to fish, but will also benefit steelhead and salmon juveniles by removing walleye and bass that may prey upon juvenile salmon and steelhead.

#### **41. CLEAR CREEK**

**PROPOSAL:** Close Clear Creek (Chelan Co) to fishing year-round.

**EXPLANATION:** Clear Creek is home to adult and juvenile upper Columbia steelhead, which are listed as endangered. In 2002 and 2003 WDFW spawning ground surveyors found 43 and 32 steelhead spawning redds, respectively, in Clear Creek. This represents about 50-55% of all redds located in the Chiwawa River drainage in those years. The mainstem Chiwawa is already closed to protect these fish.

#### **42. COLUMBIA BASIN HATCHERY CREEK CHANGES**

**PROPOSAL:** For Columbia Basin Hatchery Creek (Grant Co): Change the season from year-round to April 1 – September 30. Allow both juveniles and fishers with a disability and a reduced-fee license to fish near the hatchery outflow and in the mainstem hatchery creek, but drop the family fishing rule (juveniles and licensed adults accompanied by a juvenile) in the mainstem creek.

**EXPLANATION:** Recent improvements to the stream habitat and access have increased the popularity of this fishery, and demand now exceeds the number of fish available for stocking. The April-September season should help with this. There is handicapped access beyond the area currently open – this proposal would allow handicapped anglers access to a larger area. The family fishing rule is proposed to be eliminated in this area and other areas (see proposal for Fort Borst Pond in Region 4) because it is being abused by many adults.

#### **43. CHIKAMIN CREEK SELECTIVE GEAR RULES**

**PROPOSAL:** Add selective gear rules to the fishery on Chikamin Creek (Chelan Co).

**EXPLANATION:** This is a modification of a proposal sent in by US Fish and Wildlife Service in an effort to provide more protection to bull trout in the Chiwawa basin. This is one of three major tributaries in the Chiwawa River basin for bull trout spawning. The numbers in Chikamin Creek have been low and there is the potential for brook trout hybridization from adjacent Minnow Creek. In response to continued low abundance counts on bull trout in Chikamin Creek, this proposal is intended to reduce hooking mortality through the use of selective gear rules.

#### **44. NORTH CREEK SELECTIVE GEAR RULES**

**PROPOSAL:** Add selective gear rules to the fishery in North Creek (Okanogan Co) from the mouth to the falls at river mile 0.8 (just above Twisp River Road).

**EXPLANATION:** This is a modification of a proposal sent in by US Fish and Wildlife Service in an effort to provide more protection to bull trout in the Twisp basin. North Creek is one of the most important fluvial bull trout spawning areas in the Twisp River. In normal years, North Creek has supported nearly half of the Twisp River spawning

fish. Bull trout spawning occurs in this tributary and in the mainstem Twisp. Some of the larger fish have come from the Columbia River, as documented by radio telemetry reports. Numbers of spawning fish are low and in a recent downward trend. This proposal is intended to reduce hooking mortality to these fish through the use of selective gear rules.

#### **45. PHELPS CREEK SELECTIVE GEAR RULES**

**PROPOSAL:** Add selective gear rules to the fishery in Phelps Creek (Chelan Co) from the mouth to the falls at river mile 1.

**EXPLANATION:** This is a modification of a proposal sent in by US Fish and Wildlife Service in an effort to provide more protection to bull trout in the Chiwawa basin. Phelps Creek is one of three spawning tributaries for bull trout in the Chiwawa River. Bull trout from the Columbia River have been observed migrating to and from the Chiwawa River in recent telemetry studies. Most spawning adults overwinter in Lake Wenatchee. Spawning occurs downstream of the falls in Phelps Creek and into the Chiwawa River. Phelps Creek has a low number of spawners. This proposal is intended to reduce hooking mortality to these fish through the use of selective gear rules, while still allowing anglers to catch cutthroat trout.

#### **46. ROCK CREEK SELECTIVE GEAR RULES**

**PROPOSAL:** Add selective gear rules to the fishery on Rock Creek (Chelan Co).

**EXPLANATION:** This is a modification of a proposal sent in by US Fish and Wildlife Service in an effort to provide more protection to bull trout in the Chiwawa basin. This is one of three major tributaries in the Chiwawa River basin for bull trout spawning. Spawner numbers in Chikamin Creek have been steady in recent years. This is the largest spawning population in the Wenatchee Basin and is important for the recovery of bull trout. In response to continued low abundance counts on bull trout in other areas of the Chiwawa and Wenatchee Rivers, this proposal is intended to reduce hooking mortality through the use of selective gear rules.

#### **47. CHUMMING RULE FOR BANKS LAKE, LAKE ROOSEVELT, AND RUFUS WOODS LAKE**

**PROPOSAL:** Allow chumming for game fish in these three large lakes.

**EXPLANATION:** This would help anglers (especially bank anglers) fish for kokanee in these large lakes.

## 48. DUSTY LAKE

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Dusty Lake (Grant Co)	TROUT	Mar 1 – Nov 30	No minimum size. Daily limit 1. Selective gear rules.
	OTHER GAME FISH	Mar 1- Nov 30	Statewide min.size/daily limit. Selective gear rules.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal lengthens the season for Dusty Lake to March 1 - November 30. The current season is March 1 – July 31. It applies selective gear rules to all species and puts a daily limit of 1 on trout. Dusty Lake has a reputation for producing large trout when it is relatively free of competing species. This proposal will limit the taking of trout, allowing more of them to grow large and allowing a longer season.

## 49. EPHRATA LAKE

**PROPOSAL:** Close Ephrata Lake (Grant Co) to fishing.

**EXPLANATION:** For many years, the management of Ephrata Lake has focused on waterfowl production, resting areas for waterfowl, and other wildlife concerns. This lake has been intentionally managed to remain fish free to avoid competition for food between fish and waterfowl. A few fish have been illegally introduced and a small fishery is beginning to develop. This proposal would close the lake to fishing to allow its continued development as a waterfowl production area.

## 50. MOLSON LAKE

**PROPOSAL:** Make it unlawful to fish from a boat with an internal combustion engine on Molson Lake (Okanogan Co).

**EXPLANATION:** Molson Lake is small, shallow and weedy; has only a crude launch. The lake is easily navigated without a motor. Note that this rule only controls those folks who are fishing. A total ban to internal combustion engines would need to come from the County.

## 51. OASIS PARK POND

**PROPOSAL:** Change Oasis Park Pond (Grant Co) from a year-round lake with statewide rules to be open only to juveniles (under 15 years of age) and persons with disabilities possessing a reduced fee license with a season from the third Saturday in April through Labor Day.

**EXPLANATION:** The City of Ephrata has adopted similar rules for this water, and since state rules take precedence over municipal ordinances, they have asked WDFW to adopt this matching rule.

## 52. LAKE WENATCHEE SELECTIVE GEAR RULES

**PROPOSAL:** Add selective gear rules (except fishing from a boat with a motor allowed) to the Lake Wenatchee (Chelan Co) fishery.

**EXPLANATION:** This is a modification of a proposal sent in by US Fish and Wildlife Service in an effort to provide more protection to bull trout in Lake Wenatchee.

Lake Wenatchee is the largest of three overwinter refugia for bull trout in the Wenatchee basin and the only known overwinter refugia for the Upper Wenatchee basin. Adfluvial

(migrating between lakes and rivers) bull trout abundance is low in some adjacent tributaries to Lake Wenatchee. Bull trout using the lake are spawning in the Little Wenatchee River, White River, Nason Creek, or Chiwawa River (based on recent radio-telemetry data). Any bull trout mortality in the lake would affect all local adfluvial populations. Anglers have been observed to both intentionally (poaching) and unintentionally hook bull trout in the lake. The incidental catch is high with the use of bait and gear during salmon seasons. The catch rate of bull trout in Lake Wenatchee is high relative to other species. Adding the selective gear regulation is intended to address the continued low numbers in adjacent local populations and high incidental catch by reducing incidental hooking mortality.

## **REGION 3 RULES**

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### **53. CLE ELUM RIVER**

**PROPOSAL:** From the mouth to Cle Elum Dam, change the season to year-round and the harvest rule to catch and release for trout. Retain the selective gear rules.

**EXPLANATION:** High irrigation flow releases from the reservoir severely limit trout fishing opportunity in June, July, and August by making the lower river unfishable/unwadable. A year-round season and catch and release for trout (matching the regulation for the adjacent mainstem Yakima River) makes sense in this anadromous fish area that is already subject to “selective gear rules.”

### **54. COLUMBIA RIVER VERNITA BRIDGE TO PRIEST RAPIDS DAM**

**PROPOSAL:** Change the season for game fish (excluding trout) and sturgeon from year-round to June 1 – March 31. Fishing for trout would remain closed.

**EXPLANATION:** This change will protect ESA-listed upper Columbia R. spring chinook from illegal harvest during the peak upstream migration in April and May. A small, but significant number of boat fishermen and bank anglers fishing upstream of Vernita Bridge, allegedly fishing for non-salmonid game fish or sturgeon in the spring, are harvesting or attempting to take listed spring chinook. This change will help prevent spring chinook poaching in this uppermost 9-mile segment of the 52-mile Hanford Reach. Fishing for non-salmonid game fish and sturgeon (if the proposed new sturgeon season proposal is adopted) will continue to be open downstream of Vernita Bridge in April and May, where, coincidentally, the best habitat for bass fishing (sloughs, around islands) is located. Delaying the game fish opening until June 1 will not conflict with the BPA-funded northern pikeminnow reward program, which starts in mid-June in this area of the Columbia R.

### **55. WALLEYE RULES FOR COLUMBIA AND SNAKE RIVERS**

**PROPOSAL:** For the entire Snake River to the Columbia border and the Columbia River from Hwy 395 Bridge in Pasco to Priest Rapids Dam – walleye daily limit 10, no minimum size, no more than 5 over 18”, no more than 1 over 24”.

**EXPLANATION:** This change would make the walleye regulations consistent from the mouth of the Columbia River to Priest Rapids Dam, making enforcement much easier, and making the rules easier for anglers to understand. The regulation should also help reduce walleye predation on juvenile salmonids.

## **56. YAKIMA RIVER CATFISH RULES**

**PROPOSAL:** Remove the daily limit for channel catfish in the entire Yakima River.

**EXPLANATION:** This is essentially a “housekeeping” change to correct an oversight that occurred during the last major cycle rule process for 2002-03 when the statewide rule for channel catfish was revised. Before that statewide change, minimum sizes and daily limits for channel catfish only applied to lakes, ponds and reservoirs. No minimum size or daily limits applied to the entire Yakima River, including tributaries and drains. In order to maintain the existing harvest rule for the Yakima, an exception to the new statewide rule was proposed and adopted in 2002. However, the special rule was only applied to the lower Yakima R. downstream of Prosser Dam. The 2002-03 fishing pamphlet stated that there was no daily limit on catfish in the entire Yakima River following the intent of the original proposal, but this was not supported by the WAC. The 2003-04 pamphlet was corrected to accurately reflect the WAC as adopted in 2002, but now a rule change is needed to restore the original intent of the rule.

## **57. LOWER YAKIMA RIVER SALMON SEASONS (2 PROPOSALS)**

**PROPOSAL 1:** This proposal would shift the salmon season on the lower Yakima River (mouth to Prosser Dam) from Sept 16 – Oct 31 to Sept 1 – Oct 22. The non-buoyant lure restriction and night closure would remain in effect during the revised salmon season.

**EXPLANATION 1:** This shift in the timing of the fishery will help to prevent anglers from snagging and targeting fall chinook occupying spawning redds. The earlier opening will also provide anglers with fish in better “table condition.”

**PROPOSAL 2:** This proposal would open a fishery for fall chinook and coho salmon in the Yakima River from the Highway 223 Bridge at Granger to Sunnyside (Parker) dam. This season would be Sept 1 – Oct 22, with a daily limit of 6 salmon, no more than two adults and a minimum size of 12 inches. The non-buoyant lure restriction and night closure would be in effect during this season.

**EXPLANATION 2:** Increasing fall chinook natural production between Granger and Sunnyside Dam is sufficient to permit the fishery in this area, which contains excellent bank and boat fishing access.

## **58. UPPER YAKIMA RIVER WINTER WHITEFISH**

**PROPOSAL:** From Roza Dam to Keechelus Dam, delete the special gear regulation allowing small baited hooks for whitefish December 1 – February 28.

**EXPLANATION:** Baited (maggots, salmon eggs) size 14 hooks are ideal for catching resident trout and juvenile steelhead, as well as whitefish. The small hook requirement of the regulation may prevent injury and reduce handling of adult steelhead, but in this trout “catch-and-release” reach, where adult steelhead are scarce and resident trout are significantly more abundant, prohibiting the use of bait will reduce resident trout hooking mortality. Whitefish can still be caught in the upper Yakima on unbaited whitefish flies with barbless hooks under the existing “selective gear rules” regulation.

## **59. DOG LAKE**

**PROPOSAL:** Change the trout daily limit on Dog Lake (Yakima Co) from 5 fish (no size limits) to 5 fish, no more than 1 over 14”.

**EXPLANATION:** Triploid rainbow trout were planted in 2003 (1,600 fish) in this 60-acre, very accessible high lake (elev. 4,207 ft., max. depth 70 ft.) off of US Hwy. 12 two miles east of White Pass, in an attempt to develop a “trophy trout” fishery sustainable through the summer. Dog Lake is also stocked annually with 6,000 “catchable” rainbows (3 fish/lb) stocked in two spring releases (May and June). There is also some unknown level of brook trout natural production in NF Clear Creek, which is a tributary to Dog Lake. There is an expectation that a percentage of large triploid rainbows (15 -17” at release) may shift from aquatic insects to preying on small brook trout and other small fish. If this occurs, true “trophy” trout could be produced — provided that harvest is not excessive. Currently, bait is allowed and anglers can retain five triploid trout (statewide lake harvest rule). We do not want to change terminal gear rules, which would displace bait fishermen from a favorite lake. Many families with children and seniors camp at the USFS Dog Lake campground and fish with bait. However, we do want to reduce harvest of triploids and better distribute that harvest among anglers. Reducing harvest of large trout to 1 over 14” per day protects large triploids, helps sustain the quality of the fishery during the season and will increase carry-over survival. Anglers would continue to be allowed to harvest an additional four sub-14” “catchables” per day to fill their five fish daily limit.

## **60. LEECH LAKE**

**PROPOSAL:** Change the trout daily limit on Leech Lake (Yakima Co) to 5 fish, no MORE than 1 over 14”. No change in gear rules — Leech Lake will remain “fly fishing only” and motorized boats will continue to be prohibited

**EXPLANATION:** Triploid rainbow trout were planted in 2002 (1,670 fish) and 2003 (1,070 fish) in this 40 acre, accessible high lake in an attempt to develop a trophy trout fishery in the only “fly fishing only” water body in Region 3. Prior to the release of triploid rainbows, only naturally produced eastern brook trout were present. Although the lake produces Eastern brook trout up to 12-14”, the bulk of the population is smaller with average size 8 to 10 inches which are very abundant. There is an expectation that large rainbows (15 - 17” at release) may shift from aquatic insects to preying on small brook trout and other small fish. If this occurs, large trout could be produced — provided that harvest is not excessive. The size structure of the brook trout population will likely benefit from rainbow predation that reduces the number of small brook trout and decreases intraspecific competition for food. We do not want to completely eliminate the opportunity to harvest a large or trophy trout -- reducing harvest of trout from 2 over 12” to 1 over 14” fish per day is a good compromise, while continuing to allow the harvest of up to four “pan-sized” brook trout to reduce brook trout numbers.



## 61. LOST LAKE

**PROPOSAL:** Change the trout daily limit on Lost Lake (Kittitas Co) to 5 fish, no more than 1 over 14".

**EXPLANATION:** Triploid rainbow trout are tentatively planned to be stocked in 2004 (number of fish to be determined) in this 145-acre, drive-to lake. Lost Lake currently is not stocked with hatchery trout. The existing fishery is supported by naturally reproducing eastern brook trout. There is also a self-supporting population of small kokanee (4-8 inches), which provides forage for large brook trout. In July 2002, Region 3 staff sampled the lake with gill nets and caught one 57.5 cm (22.5"), 2.2 kg (4.85 lbs.) "trophy" brook trout. Forty smaller brook trout were also caught including a 15", 1.5 lb fish. Although the brook trout population is healthy and not stunted, angler effort on the lake is minimal---partly due to the remote location, primitive camping facilities and lack of a trailer boat launch ("car-top" boats and canoes can be launched). Stocking triploid rainbows (15 -17") is viewed by regional staff as a way to increase angler interest and utilization of Lost Lake, one of the largest natural lakes in Region 3 accessible by vehicle on maintained gravel roads. There is an expectation that a percentage of triploid rainbows may shift from aquatic insects to preying on small kokanee and brook trout fingerlings, like the trophy-size brook trout. Currently, bait is allowed and anglers can retain five large brook trout or triploid rainbows (if stocked in 2004). We do not want to change terminal gear rules, which would displace bait fishermen unnecessarily. However, we want to reduce harvest of triploids or large brook trout and distribute that harvest more evenly among anglers. Reducing harvest of trout over 14" to 1 fish per day protects large trout, helps sustain the quality of the fishery during the season and will increase carry-over survival.

## Region 4 Rules

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## 62. CEDAR RIVER CATCH AND RELEASE FISHERY

**PROPOSAL:**

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Cedar River (King Co) Mouth to Landsburg Rd Bridge (r m 21.5)	All Game Fish	June 1 – Aug 31	Catch and release. Selective gear rules.
Upstream of Landsburg Rd Bridge	CLOSED WATERS		

**EXPLANATION:** Since the closure of the Cedar in 1995, an abundant resident trout population (mostly rainbows) has developed, including some exceptionally large individuals. A catch and release fishery would allow access to those fish by anglers, creating the potential for a "quality fishery" near a major metropolitan area without jeopardizing other salmonid stocks.

While there is some public interest in harvesting these fish, with current knowledge the recommended proposal is more prudent. Studies are on-going to learn the density of resident trout in the system as well as the interaction between the rainbow and steelhead population. Current thinking is that the two groups are just one population with fish exhibiting different life histories. At least in some parts of the species range the

resident portion of the population have produce anadromous smolts. Until more is learned about this interaction, a significant reduction in the resident part of the population may create a risk to the steelhead population.

### **63. SAMISH RIVER SNAGGING PROBLEM**

**PROPOSAL:** Samish River (Skagit/Whatcom Co) – from the mouth to I-5 Bridge. During the salmon fishery (July 1 – December 31) add the provision that the line and weight and lure or bait must be moving (not stationary).

**EXPLANATION:** During this time period, snagging is a significant problem. The moving line provision has been used on other rivers, such as the Naselle, Nemah, and Grays in southwest Washington, and has been effective in greatly reducing snagging activities.

### **64. SAMMAMISH RIVER (SLOUGH) SEASON EXTENSION**

**PROPOSAL:**

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Sammamish River (Slough) (King Co)	CLOSED WATERS: all tributaries		
	TROUT	Jan 1 – Aug 31	Catch and release. Selective gear rules. CLOSED to fishing for STEELHEAD.
	Other Game Fish	Jan 1 – Aug 31	Statewide min size and daily limit

**EXPLANATION:** Under the current June 1 – Aug 31 season the trout species present are primarily smaller-sized juvenile cutthroat trout. The January 1 opening proposed will provide recreational anglers with the opportunity to fish for larger cutthroat trout during a time period (i.e., winter months) when these fish are present in the Sammamish River. Season changes for the other game fish are needed for consistency and regulation simplification and to increase recreational fishing opportunity for these species.

### **65. STILLAGUAMISH RIVER BOUNDARY ROAD NAME**

**PROPOSAL:** Change the name of the road forming the boundary between the two sections of the Stillaguamish River (Snohomish Co) from the Warm Beach-Stanwood Highway to Marine Drive.

**EXPLANATION:** The name of this road has been changed on current maps and the rule needs to be updated to reflect that.

### **66. NORTH GISSBURG POND JUVENILE ONLY WATER**

**PROPOSAL:** Make North Gissburg Pond (Snohomish Co) a juvenile only water (only open to fishing by those under 15 years of age)

**EXPLANATION:** This is an area with good access that would make a popular kids fishery. Access is controlled by the County and WDFW staff are reviewing the proposed change with County officials.

## 67. LAKE SAMMAMISH TROUT

### PROPOSAL:

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Lake Sammamish (King Co)	Waters within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek are CLOSED to SALMON fishing.		
	TROUT	Year-round	Statewide min size/daily limit. Release all STEELHEAD or RAINBOW TROUT over 20" Dec 1 – June 30. CLOSED to fishing for KOKANEE.
	Other Game Fish	Year-round	Statewide min size and daily limit
	SALMON	Aug 16 – Nov 30	Min size 12". Daily limit 2. Release SOCKEYE.

**EXPLANATION:** Recent information on the trout population (cutthroat and rainbow) in Lake Sammamish suggests that adequate numbers of large (\$14") trout exist to remove the "no more than 2 over 14 inches" portion of the current regulation.

## 68. LAKE TERRELL RESTRICTION

**PROPOSAL:** For Lake Terrell (Whatcom Co) – Extend the time when fishing from any floating device except a dock is prohibited through January 31 instead of January 15.

**EXPLANATION:** This rule was requested by our Wildlife Program to reduce the conflicts between anglers and hunters.

## REGION 5 RULES

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## 69. STANDARDIZATION OF RULES FOR CUTTHROAT PROTECTION IN SW WASHINGTON STREAMS

**PROPOSAL:** Standardize the rules for trout fishing for the following streams and times to: TROUT-catch and release only except up to 2 hatchery steelhead may be retained.

Abernathy Creek (Cowlitz Co) from mouth to 500 feet below salmon hatchery - June 1-August 31 and November 1-March 15

Cedar Creek (Clark Co) from mouth to Grist Mill Bridge - June 1-March 15

Coal Creek (Cowlitz Co) from mouth to 400 feet below falls - June 1-August 31 and November 1-February 29

Coweeman River (Cowlitz Co) from mouth to Mulholland Creek - June 1-March 15

Deep River (Wahkiakum Co) - Year-round

Drano Lake (Skamania Co) - July 1-March 15

Elochoman River (Wahkiakum Co) from mouth to West Fork; - June 1-March 15

Germany Creek (Cowlitz Co) from mouth to end of Germany Creek Road - - June 1-August 31 and November 1-March 15

Gobar Creek (Cowlitz Co) - June 1-March 15

EF Grays River (Wahkiakum Co) – June 1 – Oct 31

Hamilton Creek (Skamania Co) - June 1-October 31

Kalama River (Cowlitz Co) mouth to 1000 ft below Kalama Falls Hatchery Fishway – Year-round

Lacamas Creek (Lewis Co.) - June 1-February 29

Lewis River (Clark Co) from mouth to mouth of East Fork– Year-round

North Fork Lewis River (Clark/Skamania Co) from mouth to overhead powerlines below Merwin Dam – – June 16-September 30 and December 16-April 30

Mill Creek (Cowlitz Co.) - - June 1-August 31 and November 1-March 15  
Olequa Creek (Lewis Co) - June 1-February 29  
Rock Creek (Skamania Co.) - June 1-March 15  
Salmon Creek (Clark Co.) from mouth to 72nd Ave. NE - June 1-March 15

Explanation: Under existing regulations, trout greater than 12", 14", or 20" inches may be kept in these streams. However, wild cutthroat, or in some cases, all cutthroat must be released. Therefore, only hatchery cutthroat or any rainbows greater than the minimum size plus hatchery steelhead may be retained. In the Columbia River System, only the Cowlitz River releases hatchery sea-run cutthroat. No hatchery plants of rainbows are made in the streams listed above. Few, if any, native rainbows greater than the minimum size exist in these streams. The proposed regulation would make it legal to retain hatchery steelhead but all other trout must be released from these mainly anadromous fish areas.

## **70. COLUMBIA RIVER STURGEON FISHERY**

**PROPOSAL:** Currently, fishing for sturgeon from a floating device is closed from Beacon Rock to Bonneville Dam May 1 – July 15. This proposal would extend that closure to be from a north-south line through the eastern tip of Skamania (Prindle) Island to Bonneville Dam from May 1 – July 31.

**EXPLANATION:** Fishing in this area is basically a catch and release fishery for oversized sturgeon. This proposal is intended to limit that activity and provide more protection for these long-lived fish.

## **71. SPECIAL COLUMBIA RIVER STURGEON SEASON FOR BANK ANGLERS**

**PROPOSAL:** Open a special sturgeon season for bank anglers only on the Columbia River from the mouth to the Wauna Power Lines May 1 – September 30.

**EXPLANATION:** Bank angling for sturgeon is a popular source of recreation and a social event enjoyed by many anglers. Success rates for bank anglers are much lower than boat anglers in this area. This proposal would require that a small portion of the below Wauna share of sturgeon be set aside to accommodate the longer season for bank angling.

## 72. COWLITZ RIVER – THREE PROPOSALS

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
COWLITZ RIVER (Cowlitz/Lewis Co) from boundary markers at the mouth to Mayfield Dam	TROUT	June 1 – Mar 31	Min size 12". Daily limit 5. No more than 2 over 20" may be retained. Release wild CUTTHROAT. Release STEELHEAD with missing right ventral fin.
	Other Game Fish	June 1 – Mar 31	Statewide min. size/daily limit.
	TROUT	April 1 – May 31	Min size 20". Daily limit 2 hatchery steelhead, except release STEELHEAD with missing right ventral fin.
	SALMON	May 1 – July 31	Min size 12". Daily limit 6. No more than 1 adult may be retained. Release wild CHINOOK.
	SALMON	Aug 1 – Dec 31	Min size 12". Daily limit 6. No more than 3 adults may be retained, of which no more than 2 may be adult CHINOOK. From Blue Creek to Mill Creek, release CHINOOK Oct 1 – Dec 31.
	SALMON	Jan 1 – April 30	Min size 12". Daily limit 6. No more than 2 adults may be retained. Release wild CHINOOK, wild COHO and CHUM.
	STURGEON	May 1- June 30	Catch and release (see page 64)
	STURGEON	July 1 – April 30	Min size 42". Max size 60". Daily limit 1. (See page 64)
	EULACHON	CLOSED	
<b>Additional rules for Mill Creek to Barrier Dam:</b> upstream from a line from Mill Creek to a boundary marker on the opposite shore: 1) CLOSED WATERS from the Barrier Dam downstream 400' or the posted deadline. 2) ALL SPECIES – night closure and non-buoyant lure restriction April 1- Oct 31 3) Fishing from boats prohibited at all times 4) CLOSED to fishing on the south side of the river May 1- June 15 5) Hours of access to this area are 4:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily.			
Cowlitz River From posted PUD sign on Peters Road to the mouth of Ohanepecosh and Muddy Fork	TROUT	June 1 – Oct 31	Min size 8". Daily limit 2. Release CUTTHROAT.
	All Game Fish	June 1 – Oct 31	Statewide min. size/daily limit.
	STEELHEAD	Nov 1 – May 31	Min size 20". Daily limit 2 hatchery steelhead only.

**Proposal 1:** Make the regulations for the Cowlitz River from the Barrier Dam to Mayfield Dam the same as below the Barrier Dam.

**Explanation 1:** This proposal would allow anglers to harvest hatchery salmon and steelhead that may jump the barrier dam or may have been placed upstream, while offering protection to smolts, wild cutthroat, spring Chinook and coho.

**PROPOSAL 2:** Close the Cowlitz River to all fishing from the south side of the river from Mill Creek to the Barrier Dam May 1 – June 15.

**EXPLANATION 2:** Currently, in the permanent rules, the area from Mill Creek to the Barrier Dam is open to fishing from the south bank. Spring chinook stage in this area and are vulnerable to snagging. This rule has been put into effect by emergency rule for the last several years. This stock is critical for wild spring chinook recovery in the Cowlitz basin and throughout the lower Columbia.

**Proposal 3:** Change the season on the upper Cowlitz from year-round to the standard stream season.

**EXPLANATION 3:** By changing the game fish season from year-round to the standard stream season (June 1- Oct 31) with a steelhead only season the rest of the year, this proposal provides protection for smolts while still providing opportunity to harvest late hatchery winter steelhead, both part of the re-introduction program in the upper Cowlitz watershed.

### **73. NORTH FORK LEWIS RIVER NIGHT CLOSURE**

**PROPOSAL:** Extend the night closure and non-buoyant lure restriction on the NF Lewis River from the mouth to Colvin Creek to end November 30 instead of October 31.

**EXPLANATION:** To reduce the potential for snagging salmon. There are still significant numbers of salmon in this area during the month of November.

### **74. CLOSE TRIBUTARIES TO THE LOWER KLIKITAT RIVER**

**PROPOSAL:** This rule, requested by the Yakama Nation, would close Swale Creek, Wahkiacus Creek, Skookumchuck Creek, Snyder Creek, Wheeler Creek, Dillacort Creek, and Silvas Creek (Klickitat Co) to fishing for trout.

**EXPLANATION:** This is intended to provide protection to summer steelhead juveniles (an ESA listed species). The tributaries recommended do not contain sufficient numbers of catchable size trout to warrant a fishery. Stream survey information confirms the presence of juvenile anadromous fish.

### **75. UPPER KLIKITAT SEASON EXTENSION**

**PROPOSAL:** Extend the season for game fish on the Klickitat River (Klickitat Co) above Pitt Bridge through the last day of February. The season for whitefish would still remain open December 1 – March 31, but special whitefish gear would only be required in March.

**EXPLANATION:** By extending the season, this proposal would increase harvest of marked hatchery summer run steelhead throughout Klickitat River and reduce the stray rate of this non-indigenous stock and the potential negative impacts to listed ESA wild steelhead populations.

### **76. CARLISLE LAKE BASS RULE**

**PROPOSAL:** Change the bass rule for Carlisle Lake (Lewis Co) to the statewide standard for bass: no minimum size – daily limit 5, but only bass less than 12” or greater than 17” may be retained. No more than one over 17” may be retained.

**EXPLANATION:** The bass rule for Lake Carlisle was not changed to the statewide rule last year – and was an oversight that this rule will correct.

### **77. FORT BORST POND FISHING**

**PROPOSAL:** For Fort Borst Pond (Lewis Co) - drop the family fishing rule (licensed adults accompanied by a juvenile) for this water. Allow fishing only by juveniles (under 15 years old).

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal is intended to provide more opportunity for juveniles to fish in this water. The family fishing rule has not worked as intended. Instead of families fishing together throughout the summer, more experienced adult anglers got easy limits for a few weeks while their kids watched or played nearby, followed by greatly reduced angling opportunity for the rest of the year.

## **78. MOTOR RULES FOR LAKES IN GIFFORD PINCHOT NATIONAL FOREST**

**PROPOSAL:** Prohibit fishing from boats with internal combustion engines in Goose, Mosquito, Tahklakh, Ollalie and Horseshoe lakes in Gifford Pinchot National Forest (Skamania Co).

**EXPLANATION:** The US Forest Service, who manages these lakes, restricts the use of boats equipped with internal combustion engines. This proposal will match the Forest Service Rules.

## **79. COWLITZ RIVER, MAYFIELD AND RIFFE LAKES CLOSED WATERS**

**PROPOSALS:** Identify closed areas below Mayfield, Mossyrock, and Cowlitz Falls dams and around the water intake structure at the Cowlitz Hatchery. CLOSED WATERS areas would be— (1) Cowlitz River from 400 feet or posted markers below the barrier dam to boundary markers near the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery water intake located about 1,700 feet upstream from the barrier dam; (2) Cowlitz River from Mayfield Dam downstream 400 feet; (3) Mayfield Lake from Mossyrock Dam downstream to the Tacoma Power safety signs at Onion Rock Bridge located just below the dam; and (4) Riffe Lake from Cowlitz Falls Dam downstream to the Lewis CO PUD safety signs located about 800 feet below the dam.

**EXPLANATION:** To provide orderly fisheries with closed areas consistent with access closures below the dams and around the water intake structure at Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery. Tacoma Power and Lewis CO PUD already have closed some of the areas to access. This proposal would close these same areas to fishing.

## **80. MAYFIELD LAKE AND TILTON RIVER CUTTHROAT**

**PROPOSAL:** In Mayfield Lake and the Tilton River from the mouth to the West Fork, require the release of all cutthroat.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal will provide protection for sea-run cutthroat trout, which are part of the Tilton River anadromous fish re-introduction project. Juvenile sea-run cutthroat are being released into the Tilton River and smolts are collected from Mayfield Lake and released downstream. Returning adults are released back into the Tilton River. This rule would be consistent with the rules in the Cowlitz and Cispus Rivers and Lake Scanewa.

## REGION 6 RULES

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### 81. BIG BEEF CREEK

#### PROPOSAL:

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Big Beef Creek (Kitsap Co) from Seabeck Highway Bridge to Lake Symington	All Game Fish	June 1 – Aug 31	Catch and release and selective gear rules.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal makes the Big Beef Creek fishery catch and release for all game fish, with selective gear rules. Hatchery cutthroat and rainbow trout are not stocked in the Big Beef Creek watershed. Resident, and sea-run cutthroat trout, wild coho, and wild steelhead parr are present throughout the system during the open fishing period. Changing to selective gear regulations and catch and release would retain fishing opportunity, reduce the numbers of wild coho and steelhead smolts encountered in the fishery, and reduce injuries to these fish. This rule change would also standardize freshwater regulations of several Hood Canal tributaries (see Dewatto, Union, and Tahuya River regulations).

### 82. BIG RIVER WILD STEELHEAD RETENTION

**PROPOSAL:** Close the wild steelhead retention fishery and change to catch and release and selective gear rules for all game fish. (Retain the June 1 – Feb 28 season).

**EXPLANATION:** Big River is a small, non-monitored tributary to Lake Ozette and is vulnerable to over harvest. There is no information to determine the status of the wild steelhead run. It has been open for wild steelhead harvest for many years and only 3 have been reported caught since 1994/95. An average of 4 marked (hatchery) winter steelhead were harvested annually from 1994/95-99/00 (WDFW Catch Record Cards). No steelhead were reported harvested in 2000/01-01/02. Marked summer steelhead were reported caught in 1999/00 (6), 1996/97 (8) and 1994/95 (3). All hatchery fish caught are strays because there are no hatchery releases into Big River. This regulation is consistent with the Olympic National Park regulation in the Ozette River.

### 83. DICKEY, BOGACHIEL, AND CALAWAH SEASONS

**PROPOSAL:** Close all of these streams on April 15 instead of April 30 (or in the case of the SF Calawah, February 28).

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal is similar to the Sol Duc proposal listed previously. It provides a consistent closure for most streams in the area, which should help spread out angling pressure and expands the opportunity on the SF Calawah. It also closes these rivers to wild steelhead harvest prior to peak spawning time, which is normally around the first of May.



## **84. DUNGENESS RIVER SEASON**

**PROPOSAL:** Extend the game fish season in the Dungeness River (Clallam Co) from the mouth to the hatchery intake pipe at RM 11.3 to end March 15 instead of the last day of February, making the season Oct 16 – March 15. (All other rules remain in place)

**EXPLANATION:** This extension will allow anglers additional time to harvest additional hatchery steelhead

## **85. HOKO RIVER HATCHERY STEELHEAD**

**PROPOSAL:** Allow anglers to retain up to 2 hatchery steelhead per day during the fly fishing only fishery in the Hoko River from the upper Hoko Bridge to the Ellis Creek Bridge (RM 18.5) from June 1 – March 31. This fishery would remain catch and release for trout other than hatchery steelhead.

**EXPLANATION:** This section of the Hoko River has been on catch-and-release, fly fishing only regulations for many years. The Makah Tribe's hatchery rearing pond is just downstream of the upper Hoko Bridge and consequently hatchery steelhead do stray into the catch-and-release, fly fishing only area. This regulation will allow the harvest of some of these strays and prevent them from spawning in the wild.

## **86. HOQUIAM RIVER AND ALL FORKS, CATCH AND RELEASE SEASON**

**PROPOSAL:** For the Hoquiam River, (Grays Harbor Co), including all forks, retain the June 1 – Mar 31 game fish season but make the fishery catch and release and selective gear rules from March 1 – March 31. The salmon season would remain unchanged.

**EXPLANATION:** Early timed hatchery steelhead smolts were released into the EF Hoquiam River: 2002 - 22,000; 2001 - 15,000; 2000 - 18,300. Statewide rules will maximize hatchery winter steelhead harvest, Catch & release with selective gear rules beginning March 1 will provide fishing opportunity on a healthy wild fish stock. The opportunity to harvest hatchery steelhead will still be provided.

## **87. KALALOCH, CEDAR AND MOSQUITO CREEKS WILD STEELHEAD RETENTION**

**PROPOSAL:** Close the wild steelhead retention fishery in these three creeks, and require selective gear rules.

**EXPLANATION:** The wild steelhead populations in these streams are small and vulnerable to over-harvest. Kalaloch and Cedar Creeks are not monitored for escapement. Mosquito Creek was monitored in 2000, 2001 and 2003 (only 2 surveys per season). Approx. 6.1 miles and 5.3 miles were surveyed in 2000 and 2001, respectively. Spawning escapement estimates were 112 (18.4/mile) in 2000 and dropped to 52 (9.8/mile) in 2001. No surveys were conducted in 2002 due to lack of available staff. Only one survey in the 5.3 mile index area was completed on 4/16/03 and one additional in the lower 2.5 miles of the index area on 4/29/03. A total of only 27 redds were counted which is equal to about 50 steelhead (~9/mile).

## 88. NASELLE RIVER SEASON

**PROPOSAL:** Naselle River – mouth to North Fork – extend the game fish season to April 15. Retain current rules (catch and release for all game fish except up to 2 hatchery steelhead may be retained), but add selective gear rules from March 1 – April 15.

**EXPLANATION:** The Naselle wild steelhead run is healthy and exceeding its escapement goal. This proposal will allow anglers additional opportunity to utilize this resource. The season will close prior to the peak of spawning.

## 89. PUYALLUP AND CARBON RIVERS SEASON

**PROPOSAL:** On the Puyallup River from the 11<sup>th</sup> St Bridge to the Soldier's Home Bridge in Orting and the Carbon River from the mouth to the Highway 162 Bridge - close the game fish season on the last day in February instead of March 31. Other rules remain unchanged.

**EXPLANATION:** The Puyallup and Carbon rivers have been closed at the end of February by emergency regulation the past several years because the number of wild winter steelhead returning to the system has been substantially below the escapement goal.

## 90. QUILLAYUTE RIVER SEASON

**PROPOSAL:**

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Quillayute River (Clallam Co) from mouth to confluence of Sol Duc and Bogachiel rivers, including Olympic National Park waters	TROUT	June 1- April 15	Min size 14". Daily limit 2. 1 wild STEELHEAD per day may be retained Dec 1 – Apr 15.
	Other Game Fish	June 1-April 15	Statewide min size and daily limit.
	All Game Fish	Apr 16 – May 31	Catch and release except up to 2 hatchery steelhead may be retained.
	SALMON	Mar 1-Aug 31	Min size 12" Daily limit 6. No more than 2 adults may be retained. Release wild adult CHINOOK and wild adult COHO.
	SALMON	Sept 1 – Nov 30	Min size 12" Daily limit 6. No more than 3 adults may be retained. No more than a total of 2 adults may be CHINOOK or wild COHO.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal will provide consistent winter steelhead closures to wild steelhead retention on the north coast (Queets, Clearwater, Hoh and S.F. Hoh all close on Apr. 15). The current game fish catch and release fishery (except up to 2 hatchery steelhead may be retained) during the spring chinook salmon fishery would still occur, but would begin on April 16 instead of May 1. Anglers will still be concentrated here and on the Sol Duc during the last two weeks in April because of the open salmon fishery but harvest of wild steelhead will be eliminated after April 15. This also closes the river to wild steelhead harvest prior to peak spawning time which is normally around the first of May.

## **91. UPPER QUINULT RIVER SEASON**

**PROPOSAL:** Extend the game fish season on the Upper Quinault River (from the mouth at the upper end of Quinault Lake upstream to the National Park boundary) from the current March 31 to April 15. This would also extend the wild steelhead retention fishery until April 15.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal provides consistent winter steelhead closures on the north coast (Queets, Clearwater, Hoh and S.F. Hoh all close on Apr. 15) to help spread out angling pressure during the wild steelhead retention season.

## **92. SALMON RIVER WILD STEELHEAD RETENTION**

**PROPOSAL:** Close the wild steelhead retention fishery in the Salmon River outside the Quinault Indian Reservation and Olympic National Park. Anglers may still retain hatchery steelhead, but hatchery steelhead are identified in the Salmon River as steelhead with a dorsal fin height of less than 2 1/8" or with an adipose or ventral fin clip.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal will provide protection to wild steelhead. The Salmon River wild winter steelhead are subjected to high fishing pressure because of directed harvest on hatchery steelhead. Very few of the hatchery steelhead are marked and the wild escapement is not monitored in Salmon River. The Olympic National Park (ONP) has required the dorsal fin measurement to identify hatchery steelhead in the Queets mainstem and has adopted this same regulation in the Park area of Salmon River. This proposed regulation would be consistent with the ONP regulation.

## **93. EAST FORK SATSOP RIVER SALMON SEASON**

**PROPOSAL:** Open a salmon season for hatchery coho and chum (no retention of wild coho or chinook) on the EF Satsop River (Grays Harbor Co) from the bridge at Schafer Park upstream to the mouth of Bingham Creek November 1 - 30. The game fish season (with current daily limits and minimum sizes) would also be extended in this area through November. Selective gear rules would be required for all species in this area during the month of November.

**EXPLANATION:** Large numbers of excess coho return to the Bingham Creek Hatchery, located on the East Fork Satsop. Extending the fishing area and season for salmon will allow anglers access to hatchery coho, but minimize potential snagging problems. (This proposed season addition is not shown on the pamphlet entry for the proposal titled "*Satsop and Wynoochee Rivers Motor Prohibition*").

## 94. SOL DUC RIVER

### PROPOSAL:

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Sol Duc River (Clallam Co) from mouth to concrete pump station at Sol Duc Hatchery	TROUT	June 1-April 15	Min size 14". Daily limit 2. 1 wild STEELHEAD per day may be retained Dec 1 – Apr 15.
	Other Game Fish	June 1-April 15	Statewide min size and daily limit.
	All Game Fish	Apr 16 – May 31	Catch and release except up to hatchery steelhead may be retained.
	SALMON	Mar 1-Aug 31	Min size 12" Daily limit 6. No more than 2 adults may be retained. Release wild adult CHINOOK and wild adult COHO.
	SALMON	Sept 1 – Nov 30	Min size 12" Daily limit 6. No more than 3 adults may be retained. No more than a total of 2 adults may be CHINOOK or wild COHO.
From concrete pump station at Sol Duc Hatchery to Hwy 101 Bridge downstream of Snider Creek	TROUT	June 1 April 15	Min size 14". Daily limit 2. Selective gear rules Nov 1 – April 15.
	Other Game Fish	June 1 –April 15	Statewide min size and daily limit. Selective gear rules Nov 1 – April 15.
From Hwy 101 Bridge downstream of Snider Creek to Olympic National Park boundary	TROUT	June 1 – Oct 31	Min size 14". Daily limit 2. Selective gear rules.
	Other Game Fish	June 1 – Oct 31	Statewide min size and daily limit. Selective gear rules.

**EXPLANATION:** This rule change will provide consistent winter steelhead closures on the north coast (Queets, Clearwater, Hoh and S.F. Hoh all close to wild fish retention on Apr. 15). The current game fish catch and release fishery (except up to 2 hatchery steelhead may be retained) during the spring chinook salmon fishery would still occur, but would begin on April 16 instead of May 1. Anglers will still be concentrated here and on the Quillayute River during the last two weeks in April because of the open salmon fishery but harvest of wild steelhead will be eliminated after April 15. This also closes the river to wild steelhead harvest prior to peak spawning time, which is normally around the first of May.

## 95. TAHUYA RIVER, DEWATTO RIVER SEASON

### PROPOSAL:

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Tahuya River (Mason Co) from mouth to marker approx 1 mi above North Shore Rd Bridge	All Game Fish	June 1-Oct 31	Catch and release Selective gear rules.
	SALMON	Sept 16 – Oct 31	Min size 12". Daily limit 2 COHO only. Selective gear rules.
From marker approx 1 mi above North Shore Rd Bridge to Bear Creek-Dewatto Road crossing	All Game Fish	June 1 –Oct 31	Catch and release. Selective gear rules.
From Bear Creek-Dewatto Road crossing upstream	All Game Fish	June 1 – Oct 31	Catch and release. Selective gear rules.

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Dewatto River (Mason Co) from mouth to Dewatto-Holly Rd Bridge	All Game Fish	June 1-Oct 31	Catch and release Selective gear rules
	SALMON	Sept 16 – Oct 31	Min size 12". Daily limit 2 COHO only. Selective gear rules.
From Dewatto-Holly Rd Bridge to Bear Creek- Dewatto Road	All Game Fish	June 1 – Oct 31	Catch and release. Selective gear rules.
From Bear Creek-Dewatto Road upstream	All Game Fish	June 1 – Oct 31	Catch and release. Selective gear rules.

**EXPLANATION:** This regulation proposes to close the winter steelhead season and change the season on both these streams to the (statewide stream season). This proposal also changes all open seasons to selective gear rules which were not previously in place during the salmon seasons. This proposal is intended to protect wild winter steelhead population consistent with WDFW Steelhead Management Plan which states: ***“If a wild steelhead run is predicted to return below the escapement goal and there are few or no harvestable hatchery steelhead mixed with the under-escaped wild run or there are few or no harvestable wild steelhead of another race (i.e. winter or summer steelhead) mixed with the under-escaped wild run, all recreational steelhead fisheries will be closed”.***

Wild winter steelhead escapement in the Tahuya River has ranged from 73 to 340 fish from 1992 through 2001 and has been consistently (i.e., in 9 of the last 10 years) below the escapement goal of 236 fish; the stock is rated Depressed in Salmonid Stock Inventory due to chronically low escapement. No hatchery steelhead smolts have been stocked since 1994 so no hatchery steelhead adults are predicted to return.

Wild winter steelhead escapement in the Dewatto River has ranged from 11 to 40 fish from 1993 through 2001 and is consistently below the escapement goal of 138 fish; the stock is rated Depressed in SaSI due to chronically low escapement. No hatchery steelhead smolts have been stocked since 1994 so no hatchery steelhead adults are predicted to return.

The proposal also adds selective gear rules to the salmon fishery to protect sea-run cutthroat trout from hook-and-release mortality associated with use of bait. Catch-and-release and selective gear rules are in effect for game fish, including sea-run cutthroat. Many sea-run cutthroat are caught and released during the salmon fishery. Studies have shown that hooking mortality is high when fish are caught on bait and released. This proposal also standardizes the regulation in all sections and in all seasons to selective gear rules, which should reduce angler confusion with the regulations.

## 96. UNION RIVER SEASON

### PROPOSAL:

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Union River (Mason Co) from mouth to North Shore Rd Bridge	All Game Fish	June 1-Oct 31	Catch and release.
From North Shore Rd Bridge to the lower bridge on the Old Belfair Highway	All Game Fish	June 1 –Aug 15	Catch and release. Selective gear rules.
From to the lower bridge on the Old Belfair Highway upstream	All Game Fish	June 1 – Oct 31	Catch and release. Selective gear rules.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal would close the winter steelhead season and change the Union River to a standard stream season (June 1 – Oct 31). Catch and release and selective gear rules remain in place. (NOTE – the middle section of the river closes early for protection of summer chum salmon.

This proposal is intended to protect the wild winter steelhead population consistent with WDFW Steelhead Management Plan which states: ***“If a wild steelhead run is predicted to return below the escapement goal and there are few or no harvestable hatchery steelhead mixed with the under-escaped wild run or there are few or no harvestable wild steelhead of another race (i.e. winter or summer steelhead) mixed with the under-escaped wild run, all recreational steelhead fisheries will be closed”***; and ***“For wild runs where run sizes, escapement goals, escapements, and status cannot be readily estimated, WDFW will opt for conservative regulations (e.g., WSR, closed seasons and closed areas). Conservative regulations will remain in effect until it can be documented that the run is producing a harvestable surplus”***. Wild winter steelhead escapement in the Union River has ranged from 45 to 73 fish from 1998 through 2001; no escapement goal has been identified; the stock is rated Unknown in SaSl. (Salmonid Stock Inventory) No hatchery steelhead smolts have been stocked since 1994 so no hatchery steelhead adults are predicted to return.

## 97. WISHKAH RIVER SEASON

**PROPOSAL:** For the Wishkah River (Grays Harbor Co) from the mouth to 400 feet below the outlet of Wishkah rearing ponds – keep the June 1 – March 31 season, but beginning March 1 the fishery would be catch and release and selective gear rules for all game fish.

**EXPLANATION:** This proposal is intended to maximize the harvest of any hatchery winter steelhead that stray into the river during the December through February time frame. Catch and release and selective gear rules beginning March 1 will provide fishing opportunity on wild steelhead. Hatchery smolts are not released into the river.

## 98. WYNOOCHEE AND SATSOP RIVERS MOTOR PROHIBITION

### PROPOSAL:

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
WYNOOCHEE RIVER (Grays Harbor Co.) from mouth to 7400 Line Bridge above mouth of Schafer Creek	TROUT	June 1-Mar. 31	Min size 14" Daily limit 2.
	Other Game Fish	June 1-Mar. 31	Statewide min size/daily limit.
	SALMON	Sept. 1-Jan. 31	Min size 12" Daily limit 6. No more than 2 adults may be retained. Release adult CHINOOK.
	EULACHON	CLOSED	
	ALL SPECIES -Motors prohibited upstream of the City of Aberdeen's water intake dam. Single point barbless hooks required Aug. 16-Nov. 30.		
From 7400 Line Bridge above mouth of Schafer Creek upstream	TROUT	June 1 – Oct 31	Min size 14" Daily limit 2.
	Other Game Fish	June 1- Oct 31	Statewide min size/daily limit.
	All Game Fish	Dec 1 – Mar 31	Selective gear rules. Catch and Release except up to 2 hatchery steelhead may be retained. Fishing from a floating device prohibited.
	EULACHON	CLOSED	
	ALL SPECIES - motors prohibited. CLOSED WATERS - from Wynoochee Dam downstream 400' and from barrier dam near Grisdale downstream 400'.		

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
SATSOP RIVER AND EAST FORK (Grays Harbor Co.) from mouth to bridge at Schafer State Park	ALL SPECIES - Motors prohibited upstream of the mouth of the East Fork. Night closure, non-buoyant lure restriction and single point barbless hooks required Aug. 16-Nov. 30. from bridge at Schafer State Park upstream		
	TROUT	June 1-Mar. 31	Min size 14". Daily limit 2.
	Other Game Fish	June 1-Mar. 31	Statewide min size/daily limit.
	SALMON	Oct. 1-Jan. 31	Min size 12". Daily limit 6, No more than 2 adults may be retained. Release adult CHINOOK.
	ALL SPECIES - Motors prohibited. Night closure, non-buoyant lure restriction and single point barbless hooks required Aug. 16-Oct 31		
From bridge at Schafer State Park upstream	TROUT	June 1-Oct. 31	Min size 14". Daily limit 2.
	Other Game Fish	June 1-Oct. 31	Statewide min size/daily limit.

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
SATSOP RIVER, MIDDLE FORK (Turnow Branch) and WEST FORK (Grays Harbor Co) mouth to Cougar Smith Road	ALL SPECIES – Motors prohibited. Night closure and non-buoyant lure restriction Aug 16 –Nov 30.		
	TROUT	June 1 - Feb 28	Min size 14". Daily limit 2.
	Other Game Fish	June 1 - Feb 28	Statewide min size/daily limit.
	ALL SPECIES – Motors prohibited. Night closure and non-buoyant lure restriction Aug 16 – Oct 31		
	TROUT	June 1-Oct. 31	Min size 14". Daily limit 2.
From cougar Smith Road upstream	Other Game Fish	June 1-Oct. 31	Statewide min size/daily limit.

**PROPOSAL:** This proposal makes it unlawful to fish from a floating device equipped with a motor on the Wynoochee River above the City of Aberdeen's water intake dam, and on the Satsop River and Middle Fork Satsop above the confluence of the East and West Forks.

**EXPLANATION:** These small rivers are not suitable for fishing from powerboats, and can be fished from shore or from drift boats.

## **99. WYNOOCHEE RIVER SELECTIVE GEAR RULES**

**PROPOSAL:** Remove the selective gear rules requirement on the Wynoochee River (Grays Harbor Co) from the 7400 Line Bridge above the mouth of Schaefer Creek upstream from June 1 - October 31. Selective gear rules would remain in place for the winter fishery (December 1 – March 31). (This proposed change is shown on the pamphlet entry for the Wynoochee River from the proposal titled “*Satsop and Wynoochee Rivers Motor Prohibition*”).

**EXPLANATION.** Provides consistent gear regulations within the Chehalis River system. Both the Satsop and Chehalis rivers are open during the same time period without the selective gear restriction.

## **100. BEAVER LAKE TROUT MAXIMUM SIZE AND DAILY LIMIT**

**PROPOSAL:** Add a 12” maximum size for trout and change the daily limit from one to 5.

**EXPLANATION:** Beaver Lake has been on selective gear rules with a one fish limit since 2000. The regulations were designed to produce quality fishing, defined primarily as providing an increased number of larger fish. The regulation has failed to produce larger cutthroat and has resulted in much less fishing pressure on the lake. The lake was sampled (electrofished) by WDFW’s Region 6 warmwater team in the fall of 2002. They found an abundant population of native cutthroat that were under the average for condition factor. (A lot of fish but they were pretty skinny) This could be due to a limited food supply, competition with spiny ray fishes, (there are largemouth bass and yellow perch in the lake) or probably a combination of both. Harvesting more cutthroat (and spiny ray fishes) should result in producing larger, more robust fish. If more large fish are produced then, the 12-inch maximum size limit will assure that some have the opportunity to reach a larger size (15+”) for catch and release opportunity.

## **101. BENSON LAKE MOTOR RESTRICTION**

**PROPOSAL:** Make it unlawful to fish from a boat with an internal combustion engine at Benson Lake (Mason Co).

**EXPLANATION:** This is a small lake unsuited for the use of internal combustion engines. Homeowners around the lake passed a resolution in 1996 banning these engines. Mason County rules restrict their use.

## **102. COLLINS LAKE**

**PROPOSAL:** Change the season on Collins Lake (Mason Co) from year-round to an opening day season (Last Sat in April – Oct 31)

**EXPLANATION:** the Collins Lake Community stocks this lake. All surrounding property is privately owned. Landowners and Community Board of Trustees sent in a petition requesting this change.



### 103. LOST LAKE

**PROPOSAL:** Change the season on Lost Lake (Mason Co) from an opening day season (Last Sat in April – Oct 31) to a year-round season.

**EXPLANATION:** Lost Lake is very remote and is not fully stocked with hatchery trout. It also offers a good winter fishery, making it a good candidate for a year-round lake.

### 104. TEAL LAKE

**PROPOSAL:**

WATER	SPECIES	SEASON	ADDITIONAL RULES
Teal Lake (Jefferson Co)	All Game Fish	Last Sat in Apr-Aug 31	Statewide min size/daily limit. Internal combustion engines prohibited.
	All Game Fish	Sept 1 – March 30	Catch and release only. Selective gear rules.

**EXPLANATION:** The proposed change, from the current last Sat in April-Oct 31 season to a catch-and-release fishery beginning Sept 1, will provide a diversity of opportunity at this lake. A traditional opening day experience will be maintained, but a quality fishery will also be provided for part of the season.